

Florence-Darlington Technical College



2007-08 Institutional Effectiveness Summary Report

July 2008

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS SUMMARY REPORT 2008

The 2008 Institutional Effectiveness summary report for **Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC)** includes the following required Institutional Effectiveness reports and assessment elements:

Required Institutional Effectiveness Reports

Results of Professional Exams
Programs Eligible for Accreditation
Majors and Concentrations
Two to Four Year Transfers
Academic Affairs
-Advising Procedures
-Student Satisfaction Survey Results

Majors and Concentrations

Health Information Management
Medical Laboratory Technology
Radiologic Technology
Respiratory Care
Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning Technology
Machine Tool Technology
Legal Assistant/Paralegal Technology
Associate in Science/Associate in Arts
Surgical Technology

Advising Procedures

The guiding philosophy of Academic Advising at FDTC is that well directed students are successful students. The College's faculty and staff are dedicated to providing students with their time and expertise to advise and counsel them on academic and career decisions.

The advising process at FDTC focuses on guiding students on what course to take and on providing some understanding of how to make particular curriculum choices that will lead students to achieve their goals. Student development, growth and maturity are goals of the advising program, and advisors are trained to assist students in meeting FDTC's requirements and life's challenges. Advisors take personal interest in students and assist them in choosing a program that will drive them to achieve their goals in life.

All FDTC faculty receive training on student advising immediately upon employment with the College. The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs distributes an annually updated Faculty Handbook and Academic Advising Guide, which is published on FDTC's intranet for universal access. The Faculty Handbook and Academic Advising Guide includes a copy of the College's *Advising Procedure 40-6 - Faculty Administration*, which specifies advisors' responsibilities, and provides clear directions. The Academic Advising portion of the handbook covers:

- Advisor responsibilities
- General admissions information
- Student placement guidelines including expected testing and transfer or advanced credit assignment policies
- FERPA and ADA administration
- Early Alert Academic Advising Process for at-risk students
- Advising students in transformational situations such as developmental studies, transfer and co-op programs.

The advisor is expected to maintain current files on an assigned student, unless and until the

student is allowed to change programs and is appointed another advisor. A student's file will include such elements as transcripts, change of curriculum forms, a personal profile and personal record, advisor-advisee contact logs, long range program plans, progress checklist/graduation certification checklist, and other records deemed appropriate by the department head or advisor.

Students are required to see their advisor each semester to review the expectations of their chosen curriculum, discuss prerequisites for the program, and plan a schedule of classes for the semester. Advisors and advisees will discuss the student's career goals, present and future course load, grades, outside workload, absence policy, GPA expectations, and other issues pertinent to the student as necessary. Advisors are responsible for telling students of changes in the registration and records maintenance processes and other academic policies and procedures, as they affect the student.

The FDTC Academic Advising process is regularly reviewed and evaluated in response to the changing academic environment. Additionally, advisors are trained to be aware of current legal issues in today's society and understand how they may impact students' rights and the academic policies of the institution. Faculty advisors are evaluated in accordance with FDTC's annual Faculty Performance Management System. Students directly evaluate advisors on the College's Student Opinion of Instruction Survey administered each semester, in the graduate exit survey conducted at graduation each year, and through Noel-Levitz's Student Satisfaction Inventory administered during even-numbered years.

Student Satisfaction Survey Results

During spring 2008, approximately 1,000 FDTC students completed the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory. The top five strengths and challenges are listed in order of greatest importance and most/least satisfaction. The top five benchmarks reflect the areas in which FDTC exceeds national community college student satisfaction levels.

Strengths

- Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me.
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about my program requirements.
- I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.
- My academic advisor is approachable.
- The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent.

Challenges

- Adequate financial aid is available for most students.
- The campus is safe and secure for all students.
- Financial aid counselors are helpful.
- This school does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals.
- My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.

Benchmarks

- Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me.
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about my program requirements.

- Adequate financial aid is available for most students.
- I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.
- My academic advisor is approachable.

Transfers

Student transfer data, provided to technical colleges in accordance with an agreement between the SC Commission on Higher Education and the SC Technical College System, reveals that 163 students from Florence-Darlington Technical College attempted to transfer from FDTC to state senior institutions for fall semester 2007. Of these 163, 109 (67%) completed the application process and were accepted to the college of their choice. Seventy of those accepted (64%) actually enrolled in the senior institution.

Because of FDTC's close proximity to Francis Marion University (FMU), 76 (47%) of the College's transfer population applied for admission to FMU; 48 (63%) of those who applied were accepted. FDTC students attempted to transfer to nine other senior institutions in total. Three of the institutions received 10% or more of the transfer population: 22 (13%) applied to the University of South Carolina Columbia with 64% accepted, 18 (11%) applied to the University of South Carolina Upstate with 89% accepted, and 17 (10%) applied to Coastal Carolina University with 76% accepted.

FDTC will continue to examine the information provided and analyze how it may be used effectively in conjunction with the College's policies and practices to continue to increase academic success for students transferring to senior institutions.

Majors and Concentrations

Health Information Management

The department's 2007-2008 objectives, which can be directly linked to the FDTC's Learning Environment goal, included increasing job placement rates for Health Information Management (HIM) graduates and achieving a 90% pass rate for first-time test takers on the national certification exam (RHIT).

The HIM Advisory Board marketed graduates' abilities to physicians in the Florence area. (Past marketing efforts predominately focused on hospitals.) The Advisory Board also gathered information pertaining to the needs of area employers, which will be implemented into the program. These efforts resulted in a 5% increase in graduate job placement.

To increase exam pass rates, mock exams were given throughout the year during course time and review sessions were held in Columbia with HIM graduates from across South Carolina. This fall, weekend review sessions will also be held on campus for those who cannot attend the state meetings. One hundred percent of the graduates taking the certification exam for the first time passed.

Medical Lab Technology

The Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) curriculum was assessed and changes were made to

improve student success. The total number of required credit hours was reduced from 79 to 75. This change will lighten the first semester load for MLT freshmen and increase retention. As of this writing, all freshmen entering the program during 2007 have been retained.

The 2007 July-through-September testing cycle of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists (ASCP) certification exam revealed a 40% pass rate, a substantial decrease from previous years. Future MLT seniors will be required to take a mock certification exam. All passing students were immediately offered employment in the Pee Dee area.

Radiologic Technology

During this year of review, the Radiologic Department retained 14% more first year students while using several new assessment tools. The department provided a revised syllabi format addressing the learning objectives of all radiology courses. Students received mid-term progress reports and those in need were given opportunities for additional tutoring.

In addition, the department increased its spring 2008 graduation rate by 46% after applying revised assessment methodologies to the second year students of the curriculum. Instructors enhanced advising efforts to provide additional, regular progress reports on academic and clinical work throughout their courses. Additional testing methodologies were designed to measure the level at which testing covers the objectives of the course. Further, students were provided additional opportunities for tutoring in class work and lab.

Respiratory Care Technology

To improve the Respiratory Care Technology learning environment, the department addressed several assessment issues throughout the year, increased retention of first year students by 27% over the previous class, and retained eleven (92%) second year students. The department worked in partnership to validate test material against course objectives across the curriculum and used this source data to provide additional academic counseling to students regarding their progress. Also, students were provided additional instructor and peer tutoring in open lab learning sessions.

By providing students with additional opportunities for preparation, the department increased the pass rate on the Certification Examination for Entry Level Respiratory Therapy Practitioners to 91%. Instructors utilized an internet-based program to assist students in mastering the review material and preparing for mock exams. The program included academic support, feedback on individual student strengths and weaknesses and practices to overcome testing anxiety.

Legal Assistant / Paralegal

The department continues to examine and address recruitment and retention process mechanisms. Student enrollment increased by 12.5% during fall 2007 and 102% during spring 2008 through visits with local high schools and participation in service area college fairs. Further, prospective students were contacted by phone and by mail to answer any program-related questions and provide assistance with the admissions process.

Retention of first year Legal Assistant/Paralegal students has increased by offering more opportunities for students to receive academic counseling throughout the semester. Midterm

conferences identify struggling students, who are referred to additional tutoring. Intervention at this stage of the semester generally allows students to improve their grades and move on to the next level of classes the following semester.

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Technology

Assessments revealed that HVAC students achieved low pass rates on national exams. During 2007/2008, the department focused on attaining a successful pass rate of at least 80% for certificate and degree students taking the EPA Refrigerant Handling and Management exam. Instructors developed comprehensive study guides and practice tests for Type 1 (certificate students) and Type 2 (degree students) exams. Use of these materials led to an 82% success rate for certificate students and an 80% success rate for degree students.

Machine Tool Technology

During 2007, the Machine Tool Technology (MTT) department worked to improve the learning environment and increase enrollment. The program was relocated to FDTC's Southeastern Institute of Manufacturing and Technology (SiMT) facility. Housing MTT at SiMT will give students access to the latest technology available; program graduates will have experience with the kinds of machinery utilized in the field.

Promotional literature for MTT was distributed to career centers in FDTC's service area. Numerous high schools from Florence, Darlington and Marion counties have visited SiMT to learn more about the MTT program. In addition, the department hosted the State Machine Tool Competition at SiMT.

Associate in Science

During the review period, the department sought to improve successful completion rates in the Natural Science Department and to improve program satisfaction ratings. The department aimed for the successful completion (a grade of "C" or better) by 70% of students for every credit course offered in the Natural Science Department. Pre-requisites were reviewed and revised to ensure appropriate preparation and opportunity for students to succeed in advanced coursework. Additional laboratory skills, progressive collaborative learning exercises and revised assignments for maximizing instructor effectiveness were incorporated into some courses. The objective was met in 60% of the applicable courses, indicating the instructors' need to continue improvement efforts in the courses that fell short.

Faculty surveyed graduates to learn how satisfied they were with their experience in the Associate in Science program. One hundred percent of the program graduates surveyed rated their overall satisfaction with the program at 3.5 or greater on a 5-point scale. This exceeded the department's goal of achieving the rating with 80% of the graduates. Based on information from the evaluation, the department plans to provide students with better customer service outside the classroom, upgrade instructional facilities, and continue to re-evaluate course materials.

Associate in Arts

The **Associate of Arts (AA) Degree Program** at FDTC prepares students to transfer specific courses, or a degree in its entirety, to a four-year college or university. The program functions in alliance with many departments across the College to provide instruction in English, math,

humanities, and the sciences. Students are also expected to become skilled in the use of technology in course activity and demonstrate that they can successfully function collaboratively and accomplish tasks in teams. Assessment efforts in the Mathematics, English and Humanities departments are examined.

The **Mathematics Department** works cooperatively with all curricular programs across campus to provide appropriate mathematics instruction in order for students to successfully complete their respective programs. The assessment objectives this year were focused on several learning environments including course success rates, increased learning opportunities in the FDTC Math HUB and recruiting service area high schools for participation in the College's annual Math Contest. To continue to have students demonstrate mastery of course competencies without significant deviation from the 5-year moving statistics of the department, instructors designed and implemented revised departmental final exams for all math sections each semester this year. The department's goal to slightly increase the previous 5-year moving average of the mean score of exams department-wide was met.

Further, the department worked to increase the mean success rate on the courses offered in the College's technology enhanced Math Hub. They designed pre and post tests for all of the applicable courses offered at the Center and analyzed the results throughout the period. They determined that there is an indication of increased learning in the technology-based sections as compared to the traditional sections. Due to its success, FDTC will expand the Math Hub. By fall 2009, every non-curricular math course held on the main campus will be taught in this hybrid environment. In addition, the College will offer two curricular math courses in the Math Hub to test their viability in this environment.

Finally, the department was successful in increasing the number of high schools participating in the FDTC's Annual Mathematics Contest from 11 to 16. The department contacted 23 public and private high schools within Darlington, Florence, and Marion counties regarding the contest.

The goals of the **English Department** during 2007/2008 were to improve student outcomes in reading and writing and to enhance their instruction with technology. Specifically, the department sought to implement computer-aided instruction and achieve a 10% gain between pre-and post-tests in developmental reading and developmental English courses in two pilot sections for fall 2007.

MyReadingLab, a mastery-based reading program that provides students with multiple vocabulary and reading features and testing options, was introduced to students in the pilot courses. Faculty members were trained on the use of the program to ensure that students received immediate feedback after each assigned lesson. At the end of the term, post-test scores in developmental English indicated a 29% gain and post-test scores in developmental reading reflected a 10% gain.

The **Humanities Department** works collaboratively with all curricular programs across campus to provide the general knowledge and intellectual skills needed for students to successfully complete their respective programs. The goal of the department during this review period was to create and implement a hybrid version of the course HSS 205 (Technology and Society). Faculty

created a project exercise component to accompany the lecture portion of the course. Lectures were recorded using Camtasia software and new student-centered projects developed. The hybrid class launched during the 2008 summer term.

Surgical Technology

During 2007/2008, the department worked to maintain the marketability of program graduates by increasing the number of students who take the National Surgical Technology Certification. Exam fees are now added to senior curriculum students' tuition, making the fees eligible for some forms of financial aid. Applications for the exam are completed and mailed en masse prior to graduation, and the program director assists students with scheduling the exam. Since FDTC is an approved pre-graduate testing center for the National Surgical Technology Certification exam, students have the option of testing on campus. These changes resulted in a 100% take rate for the summer 2008 term (an increase of approximately 45%).